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## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

SEP 28 2006

1-20. (CANCELED)

21. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A personally portable vacuum desiccator for collecting and storing liquid exudate from a wound or incision on a user comprising:

- a chamber having a trapping agent;
- a vacuum pump in fluid gas/liquid flow communication with said chamber;
- a motor operably connected to said vacuum pump; and
- a tube having a first end in fluid gas/liquid flow communication with said chamber  
and a second end in fluid communication with the wound or incision to  
transmit the liquid exudate from the wound or incision to the chamber;  
said tube being positionable in gas/liquid flow communication with a wound or  
incision on a user;
- said vacuum desiccator being transportable upon the user's person;
- said vacuum pump being operable to draw liquid exudate fluid from the wound or incision through said tube and into said chamber;
- said trapping agent having a capacity for trapping a volume of the liquid exudate fluid.

22. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 21 wherein said trapping agent is selected from the group consisting of desiccants, adsorbents, and absorbents.

23. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 21 wherein said tube comprises a single passage gas/liquid flow path.

24. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 21 wherein said trapping agent is disposed within a cartridge that is removable from said desiccator.

25. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 21 further comprising a control circuit in electrical communication with said motor for controlling the operation of said motor.

26. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 25 wherein said control circuit comprises at least one sensor selected from the group consisting of moisture sensors, pressure sensors, and pressure differential sensors.
27. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 25 wherein said control circuit comprises an I/O unit.
28. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 21 wherein said chamber comprises a transparent material which allows observation of said trapping agent.
29. (NEW) A personally portable vacuum desiccator for collecting and storing liquid exudate from a wound or incision on a user comprising:
  - a chamber having a trapping agent;
  - a vacuum pump in fluid communication with said chamber;
  - a motor operably connected to said vacuum pump;
  - a tube having a first end in fluid communication with said chamber and a second end in fluid communication with the wound or incision during healing of the wound or incision;
  - said vacuum desiccator being transportable upon the user's person;
  - said vacuum pump being operable to draw liquid exudate from the wound or incision through said tube and into said chamber; and
  - said trapping agent having a capacity for trapping a volume of the liquid exudate.
30. (NEW) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 29, wherein said trapping agent is selected from the group consisting of desiccants, adsorbents, and absorbents.
31. (NEW) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 29, wherein said tube comprises a single passage flow path.
32. (NEW) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 29, wherein said trapping agent is disposed within a cartridge that is removable from said desiccator.

33. (NEW) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 29 further comprising a control circuit in electrical communication with said motor for controlling the operation of said motor.
34. (NEW) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 33, wherein said control circuit comprises at least one sensor selected from the group consisting of moisture sensors, pressure sensors, and pressure differential sensors.
35. (NEW) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 33, wherein said control circuit comprises an I/O unit.
36. (NEW) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 29, wherein said chamber comprises a transparent material which allows observation of said trapping agent.
37. (NEW) A vacuum desiccator for collecting and storing liquid exudate from a wound or incision comprising:
  - a chamber having a trapping agent;
  - a vacuum pump in fluid communication with said chamber;
  - a motor operably connected to said vacuum pump; and
  - a tube having a first end in fluid communication with said chamber and a second end in fluid communication with the wound or incision to transmit the liquid exudate from the wound or incision to the chamber.
38. (NEW) The vacuum desiccator of claim 37, wherein said vacuum desiccator is transportable upon the body of a person having the wound or incision.
39. (NEW) The vacuum desiccator of claim 37, wherein said vacuum pump is operable to draw liquid exudate from the wound or incision through said tube and into said chamber.
40. (NEW) The vacuum desiccator of claim 37, wherein said trapping agent includes a capacity for trapping a volume of the liquid exudate.

41. (NEW) A vacuum desiccator for collecting and storing liquid exudate from a wound or incision comprising:
  - a chamber having a trapping agent;
  - a vacuum pump in fluid communication with said chamber;
  - a motor operably connected to said vacuum pump; and
  - a tube having a first end in fluid communication with said chamber and a second end in fluid communication with the wound or incision during healing of the wound or incision.
42. (NEW) The vacuum desiccator of claim 41, wherein said vacuum desiccator is transportable upon the body of a person having the wound or incision.
43. (NEW) The vacuum desiccator of claim 41, wherein said vacuum pump is operable to draw liquid exudate from the wound or incision through said tube and into said chamber.
44. (NEW) The vacuum desiccator of claim 41, wherein said trapping agent includes a capacity for trapping a volume of the liquid exudate.
45. (NEW) A vacuum desiccator comprising:
  - a chamber having a trapping agent;
  - a vacuum pump in fluid communication with said chamber;
  - a motor operably connected to said vacuum pump;
  - a tube having a first end in fluid communication with said chamber and a second end adapted to be positioned in fluid communication with a wound or incision; and
  - wherein the vacuum desiccator is generally flat and may be worn unobtrusively by a user and is adaptable for collecting and trapping liquid exudate from the wound or incision in said chamber.
46. (NEW) The vacuum desiccator of claim 45, wherein the tube transmits liquid exudate from the wound or incision to the chamber.
47. (NEW) The vacuum desiccator of claim 45, wherein the second end of the tube is in fluid communication with the wound or incision during healing of the wound or incision.